



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**MANAGER'S REPORT**

DATE ISSUED: May 16, 2001 REPORT NO. 01-082

ATTENTION: Honorable Mayor and City Council  
Docket of May 22, 2001

SUBJECT: City Administration Building Sprinkler Retrofit

SUMMARY

Issues -

1. Should the City Council authorize the City Manager to award a Design/Build Contract to the most responsive and responsible Design/Build Team (DBT) for the installation of the City Administration Building Fire Protection and Life Safety Improvement Project?
2. Should the City Council authorize the City Manager to establish contract funding phases with the most responsive and responsible DBT, and execute a contract with selected DBT, providing that the City Auditor first furnishes a certificate demonstrating that the funds necessary for expenditure under said contract are, or will be, on deposit in the City Treasury.
3. Should the City Council pass an ordinance amending the Municipal Code to allow for the completion of the City Administration Building (CAB) sprinkler retrofit project?

Manager's Recommendation - Introduce and adopt the ordinance, and adopt the resolutions.

Other Recommendations - None.

Fiscal Impact - \$776,840 has been budgeted for Fiscal Year 2001; \$998,140 is required for Fiscal Year 2002 and \$996,050 is required for Fiscal Year 2003 to complete the CAB retrofit.

## BACKGROUND

In 1988, the Mayor and City Council passed Ordinance Number 0-17172 requiring sprinkler retrofitting for high rise buildings. Specific exemptions were granted for hospitals, residential buildings and all government buildings except the City's (County, State, Port District, UCSD, and SDSU are all exempt). The City of San Diego is the only jurisdiction in the State that did not provide such an exemption for itself. The Council chose instead to demonstrate the importance of life safety features in high rise buildings and to comply with the requirements. In 1991, the Council extended the compliance deadline from 1996 to 1999 for buildings which contained asbestos. In addition, an exemption was available if the building owners agreed in writing to demolish their buildings. Several local building owners and the City chose this option mainly because of the costs associated with asbestos abatement. In 1995, the Mayor and City Council passed Resolution Number 0-286760 declaring its intent to comply with the ordinance by demolishing CAB prior to January 1, 2000, thereby saving an estimated \$7.5 million for the retrofit. The City then engaged in a series of comprehensive studies to determine the best alternatives for the building and the entire community concourse. At that time, the downtown office space market was stagnant. The first two phases of a comprehensive Civic Center Master Plan study were completed, as well as a complete facility analysis of CAB. The City was able to negotiate very favorable lease rates, including extensions and expansions as recommended in the Master Plan. Since 1995 the downtown office space market has enjoyed a complete turn around. In addition, the costs associated with both retrofit and demolition of CAB increased dramatically.

The change in market forces caused us to revisit our decision to demolish CAB. In 1998, the City developed a spot asbestos abatement strategy which would save the taxpayers in excess of \$20 million and retain valuable office space in CAB. This strategy was successfully tested in 1999 as Phase I of the project, and has become the basis for the current scope of work. Other local buildings, the El Cortez for example, have similarly revised their compliance plan from demolition to retrofit. Prior to commencement of subsequent phases, it was intended that a complete policy discussion regarding the Civic Center Master Plan would occur.

Under the current sprinkler retrofit ordinance, the City Manager and/or the Fire Chief can grant exemptions from the prescribed compliance timelines. Occupancy of the building can be permitted if a sprinkler retrofit project is underway. Rather than invoke this exception for CAB, we are requesting that the proposed ordinance amending the Municipal Code, be introduced and adopted to extend the compliance period to January 1, 2004 to complete the CAB sprinkler retrofit project based upon the proposed work schedule.

## DISCUSSION

During Phase I, sprinklers were installed on the 10th, 14th and 15th floors. In addition, a backflow preventer, pump motor, piping, transfer switch, gaskets and drain lines were installed. The final ties-in cannot be completed until basement piping and stand pipes are replaced which

will occur during Phase II. During Phase I, installation for the 10<sup>th</sup> floor was completed over a duration of four weekends. So as not to interfere with workday activities in CAB, work began each weekend on Friday at 6:00 p.m. and would be complete prior to 6:00 a.m., Monday morning. This included asbestos spot abatement, installation of sprinkler lines, clean up, air monitoring, and clearances. This procedure is repeated until the floor is complete. This strategy allows for substantial cost savings because no staff relocation is required. Phase I was successfully completed on time and on budget.

We anticipate the same four weekend duration per floor for the rest of the building. The only exception is the 11<sup>th</sup> floor which contains Amosite tile. Procedures for amosite abatement are more stringent and require contiguous abatement methods. Therefore, it will be necessary to vacate the entire floor for a period of two weeks in order to abate all the tile and install the fire sprinkler and alarm system.

Assuming four weeks per floor, for each of the twelve remaining floors, 48 weeks will be necessary. Standpipe installation will take three weeks for each of the two stairwells. Basement installation including replacement of eight-inch main, sprinklers and dry suppression systems for the Auditors and Records Management will take six weeks. Installation of emergency generator and construction of structural steel deck at the top of Golden Hall loading dock will take eight weeks. The entire project will take approximately 68 weeks to complete. Construction will begin in June of 2001 and be completed in April 2003.

#### CURRENT EFFORTS

In the fall 2000, Schirmer Engineering Corporations was hired to prepare the design/build documents necessary to advertise a Request for Qualification (RFQ), followed by a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the purpose of hiring a DBT. The DBT would be hired to complete the project design and install the fire protection system.

On January 19, 2001, the Engineering and Capital Project Department advertised a RFQ and is currently qualifying Design/Build Teams prior to issuing the RFP. Once the design/build teams respond to the RFP, Engineering and Capital Projects Department will enter into contract negotiations and award of the design/build contract. This process is anticipated to be completed by the end of April, followed by the start of construction in June.

### ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not authorize the City Manager to award the design/build contract.
2. Do not authorize the City Manager to establish contract funding.
3. Do not adopt the ordinance and direct the City Manager to invoke the exceptions already provided for in the existing ordinance to complete the CAB sprinkler retrofit project.

Respectfully submitted,

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Frank Belock, Jr.  
Engineering and Capital Projects Director

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Approved: George I. Loveland  
Senior Deputy City Manager

BELOCK/WTG